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U.S. Issues Protest to Nicaragua Over Expulsion of Two Journalists

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The State Department protested yesterday to the government of Nicaragua over the detention and expulsion of two American journalists.

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Glenn Garvin, Washington Times correspondent for Central America, and Sue Ann Mullin, a freelance photographer, were held by Interior Ministry security agents in Managua for nine hours on Friday and then expelled to San Jose, Costa Rica, where they are based.

The Sandinista government on Monday accused both journalists of having "ties to the CIA."

"The expulsion was an obvious attempt to intimidate reporters and the Nicaraguans

with whom they were in contact," State Department spokesman Pete Martinez said.

Martinez said the State Department plans to hand over notes in both Managua and Washington protesting the treatment of the two journalists.

Garvin's notes and a tape recording were taken from him by the Nicaraguan authorities. The State Department protest asks that the confiscated notes and property be returned immediately by the Sandinista authorities.

Although many reporters have been denied entry to Nicaragua, the expulsion of Garvin and Mullin apparently is the first time foreign journalists have been deported since the Sandinista government came to power in 1979.